IT PRINTS AS THE BLIND MAN

READS

SCIENCE AND INVENTION

It Prints as the Blind Man Reads

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THE BLIND MAY NOW READ any ordinary ink-printed book by touch.

Not directly, of course, but by reproducing the words in embossed letters by means of the printing visagraph—a remarkable new invention.

The original visagraph, brought out some three years since, attempted to indicate the shape of the letters by sounds; the resulting complications resulted in renewed effort, ending in the production of the present instrument by the inventor, Robert E. Naumburg, of Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Mr. Naumburg contributes to *The Outlook for the Blind* (New York) the following description of his device:

"The printing visagraph is intended for use by the blind person himself. He puts the ink-print or letter-press book into the book-holder, makes all necessary adjustments, and reads without the aid of any other person.

"Sound has been completely abandoned, as it has proven fatiguing and unsatisfactory. The sense of touch alone is used, as in braille, New York Point, Moon type, and line type. Moreover, the fore-finger of the right hand, already trained to read embossed letters, is used. In this way, a long period of training is eliminated in the case of those who already know some kind of raised type.

"The printing visagraph produces a magnified, raised image of the printed page, one line of printing after another. The impression, made on a thin sheet of aluminum, may be either preserved or erased. The aluminum foil resembles the tinfoil used in wrapping candy and cigars.

"The raised character consists of dots and lines, so close together as to give the impression on the finger of a continuous letter. A capital T consists of a long line across the top forming the horizontal bar, and a number of dots close together forming the vertical line. The size and shape of braille dots have been followed closely.

"The height of the visagraph letters, from top to bottom, is the same as of the braille letters of greatest height. It may seem strange, but it is true that the height of the visagraph letters is always the same, regardless of the size of the letters printed in ink.

"The visagraph reproduction of any word or sentence in the average book occupies about the same space from left to right, as the same word or sentence printed in uncontracted braille.

"The visagraph is cosmopolitan. It can read letters with French, German, or Spanish accent marks as readily as it can the English language.

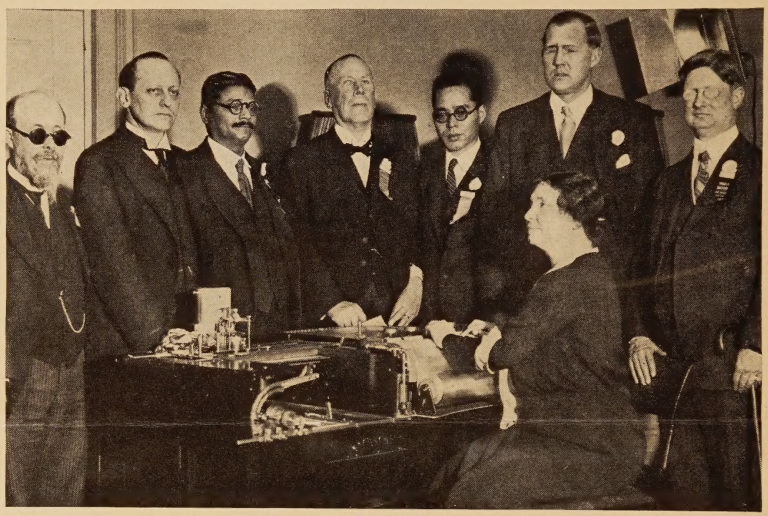
"In size and in appearance the printing visagraph resembles a flat-top desk used in offices.

"Just as in the case of the telephone, the telegraph, the radio and television, there are two parts, the sending portion and the receiving portion, so also the printing visagraph consists of two main parts.

"The left half of the box, on top, is occupied by the printed book, opened right side up at any desired page, and prest upward against a flat plate of glass by a book-holder. Above the book is the 'lighthouse.' It contains a lamp and also a selenium or photoelectric cell, sensitive to light. The lighthouse is the sending station or transmitter.

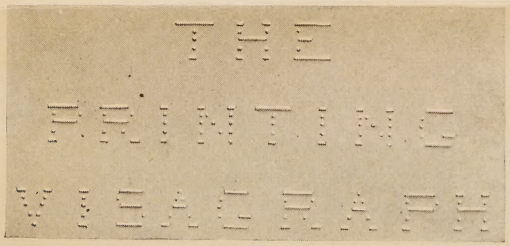
"In the right half of the top box is the 'printer,' which reproduces on the aluminum sheet, in embossed letters what the electric eye of the lighthouse 'sees.' The printer is the receiving station.

"The printing visagraph is the first machine in the world which, from an ordinary ink-print book, can produce a raised image which the sightless may enjoy."



Miss Helen Keller, Deaf and Blind, Reading on the Visagraph

Mr. Naumburg, the inventor, is second from the left. At the extreme right is Mr. Robert B. Irwin of the American Foundation for the Blind. The others in this group are delegates to the World Conference on Work for the Blind, called by President Hoover.



How the Lettering of the Machine Looks

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